



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Budget Adjustment to the Toronto Public Health 2009 Approved Operating Budget for Flu Assessment Centres

Date:	December 21, 2009
To:	Board of Health
From:	Medical Officer of Health
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to request a budget adjustment to Toronto Public Health's (TPH) 2009 Operating Budget. This adjustment reflects 100 per cent funding from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) Emergency Operations Centre, for the reimbursement of extraordinary costs to implement flu assessment centres, as part of the City's response to the second wave of H1N1 in fall of 2009.

Toronto Public Health implemented five flu assessment centres in partnership with other health service organizations in the city i.e. hospitals, family health teams and community health centres. The flu assessment centres provided temporary relief for hospital emergency room services and primary care, offering alternate point of care access for patients who required influenza assessment, treatment and referral in accordance with the planning and response principles outlined in the Ontario Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic (OHPIP) and the Toronto Public Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic (TPHP).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Medical Officer of Health recommends that:

1. City Council increase the Toronto Public Health 2009 Operating Budget for one-time funding of \$135.0 thousand gross and \$0.0 net, provided by the MOHLTC to reimburse the cost for implementation of flu assessment centres during the fall of 2009 as part of the City's H1N1 pandemic response; and

2. this report be forwarded directly to the City Council meeting of January 26, 2010 for approval.

Financial Impact

The table below summarizes the requested one-time budget adjustment to Toronto Public Health's 2009 Operating Budget.

	Gross \$000	Revenue \$000	Net	2010 Gross/Revenue Impact \$000
Operating Budget for Flu Assessment Centres	135.0	135.0	0.0	(135.0)
2009 Total Budget Adjustment	135.0	135.0	0.0	(135.0)

This 100 per cent funding will be provided by the MOHLTC to reimburse TPH for the cost of supplies and materials that were ordered for the centres' operations, as well as the contracted staff and overtime costs for TPH staff.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

OHPIP identified the need for local planning of contingency measures for alternate influenza assessment, treatment and referral, should primary care systems become overwhelmed during a pandemic. The goal of these centres was to provide timely influenza assessment, treatment and referral services to patients who could not access primary care and to ensure the provision of these services for vulnerable clients as well as those without a primary care provider. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care designated TPH as the lead agency for planning alternate influenza assessment for the City of Toronto.

The Toronto Public Health Pandemic Influenza Plan included a plan for flu assessment centres which would be implemented and staffed primarily by TPH. However, with the provincial shift to focus on utilizing the existing primary care system in an influenza pandemic, the recognition of benefits to be gained from working in collaboration with existing health service organizations, as well as the potential need to implement mass immunization clinics simultaneously with the centres, TPH planning shifted to a partnership model in July 2009.

TPH approached several health service providers (i.e. hospitals, family health teams, community health centres) to work in partnership to implement flu assessment centres

within their existing clinical spaces and using some of their staff as appropriate or available. Sites were evaluated based on size and capacity while considering infection control criteria and public accessibility. The location of the site was also considered in order to provide good coverage across the city and to ensure high-need areas were covered. Eight possible partnerships were identified. Five centres were implemented and operated for varying lengths of time between November 12th and December 1st i.e. Scarborough Hospital, Southeast Toronto Family Health Team, Sherbourne Family Health Team, York Community Services, and Humber River Regional Hospital. Operating cost estimates for these centres included those borne by the partner organization and Toronto Public Health. These cost estimates were submitted to the MOHLTC prior to opening the centres. Each centre is responsible for arranging reimbursement of their costs with the Ministry directly.

COMMENTS

The implementation of flu assessment centres was part of the operational response for the H1N1 pandemic in Toronto. These centres provided temporary overflow relief for emergency rooms and primary care as well as a point of access to influenza primary care services for vulnerable clients and those without a primary care provider. Planning and operating these centres in partnership with existing health service organizations allowed Toronto Public Health to strengthen our relationships with these important stakeholders. In total, the five sites saw 819 patients during their operation.

CONTACT

Dr. Barbara Yaffe
AMOH and
Director, Communicable Disease Control
Toronto Public Health
Phone: 416-392-7405
Fax: 416-392-0713
Email: byaffe@toronto.ca

Shirley MacPherson
Director, Finance and Administration
Toronto Public Health
Phone: 416-392-7467
Fax: 416-392-0713
Email: smacphe@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Dr. David McKeown
Medical Officer of Health